

5. Developing relationships

Relationships with both people and places can be strengthened through a Froebelian approach to nature engagement.

“Children enjoyed playing with ... friends ... Just being outside ... looking after the plants ... [and] growing things”

(Russell, 2023, p.22)



Look at the photo. Think about the different ways relationships are being developed through this gardening interaction.



Developing relationships

What the research tells us

Positioning early childhood settings as part of a community opens up possibilities for sustainable relations to develop. This can be supported by the reciprocal sharing of knowledge, resources and experience ^(1,2).

- One Jamaican primary school situated in an area of high poverty and unemployment developed a Froebelian-inspired kitchen garden and rainwater harvesting system to improve local food and water supplies. Community involvement strengthened relationships, boosted children's interpersonal skills, sparked their interest in sustainable practices, and benefited their overall health ⁽¹⁾.

- Hands-on, Froebelian-inspired training provided educators at one school in Scotland with the confidence and skills to become a nature engagement hub, sharing expertise with families and other educators ⁽²⁾.

Find out more:

1. **Burke (2023)** 2. **Russell (2023)**



Nature engagement experiences can offer an effective focus for developing stronger community relationships.

